

**MEN'S BODYBUILDING IMAGES IN THREE MAGAZINES**

**1970 TO 2008**

**A RESEARCH PROJECT**

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The obsession with the body image can be traced to ancient Greek civilizations. Men's obsession with their body images has surfaced to the forefront of the media within the last few decades. Using in-depth research techniques, the researcher discussed trends on how body images of men have changed over the last four decades. Three magazines were analyzed to determine if there are any patterns or consistencies in the type of male body image portrayed. The researcher also identified certain bodybuilders and celebrity figures who might be responsible for understanding why men wanted to achieve a look or why they decided to practice certain fitness trends.

Fitness trends that men follow can be linked to popular magazines such as *Muscle Magazine*, *Men's Health*, *Muscle and Fitness*, *Flex*, *Iron Man*, *Pump*, *the Bodybuilder* and many more publications on supermarket shelves. Magazine covers, within the magazine will be analyzed to better understand the trends and changes.

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## INTRODUCTION

The body images of women have always preoccupied modern media. Magazines, television programs, and newspapers have capitalized on creating packages devoted to exploring the female figure and devising ways to help women look like celebrities. Female celebrities have published articles, books and produced videos trying to help the “average woman” achieve these looks. More media attention has been given to women because higher percentages of them seem to follow fad diets and exercise programs.

Not nearly as much attention, however, has been given to men who seem equally mesmerized by celebrity and bodybuilding images. Men have also been immersed in the trend of reading magazine articles and trying to follow celebrity diets to get the wash-board abdominals and the 18-inch biceps. Magazines such as *Flex and Muscle Magazine* have men of all ages buying subscriptions and running to the closest grocery store to see what new diet a bodybuilder or a fitness model is following so they can apply it to themselves. These magazines are even more popular because of the new and innovative workouts. These workouts have fitness competitors winning competition after competition. Many men believe if they incorporate these activities into their daily gym routines that it will too work for them.

But following diet and exercise programs are not enough for most men trying to achieve significant gains. Dietary supplement advertisements make up most of the content in popular men’s magazines. The logic behind these ads is that people can achieve the maximum gains if they use supplements combined with diet and exercise practices. Dietary supplement usage was

an underground practice that has surfaced in popular advertisements. People of both genders feel the pressure to gain the “perfect body.” Why people feel this pressure can be attributed to several reasons. Media images are always the first suspect. People want their bodies to look like celebrities who have undergone surgeries and taken illegal supplements. Self-image insecurities are also a reason. People are not happy with their physical image and tend to focus on their “outer” flaws. But the most standard reason why people put pressure on themselves for achieving the perfect body is because people see that these images portrayed in the media are attainable by their peers. The peers are the ones who initially use the supplements and see results. So a prospective user then says, “If it worked for them, then it can work for me.”

The supplements that are not seen in magazines can be seen in certain workout documentaries. Arnold Schwarzenegger was an alleged user of illegal supplements. And Schwarzenegger, being the poster boy for western bodybuilding, has many wanting to emulate his practices.

Almost everyone using supplements is motivated by having the title of “Best Built Body.” People who have won body-building titles and have been featured in the news, have been the object of adulation as well as rancor. And “normal people” want that same attention. This is why images in the media may be linked to steroid usage. Using illegal supplements is not as simple as inserting a needle. Different steroids such as dianabol or liv 52 are used to affect different aspects of the body. Some are used for fast muscle gains. Some are used for slower, progressive gains. Clenbuterol is used to burn fat so the body appears extremely conditioned for the day of the competition. Like ephedra (another supplement used to burn fat), it is not for human use because long-term side effects are unknown. It is, however, supposedly more powerful than ephedra. It is now primarily used in livestock to promote lean beef. Research says although the long-term health effects are not documented, it is relatively safe compared to other drugs. Because supplements like ephedra have been banned, popular bodybuilding magazines are

advertising new supplements. But even the new supplements don't deter people from using illegal drugs.

Research suggests that although women competitors do use illegal supplements, men are more prone to this behavior. The main reason is the results on the body after consuming legal or illegal supplements are masculine in nature. Women and men featured on magazine covers and commercials share some the same physical characteristics after following intense diet and exercise routines while simultaneously using supplements. They both have small waists, muscularity in the limbs, vascularity and conditioned midsections. These characteristics are most common to men due to the percentage of body fat they carry as opposed to their female counterparts.

Consequently, the main question is whether this trend of emulating bodybuilders and fitness models has always been prevalent, or has the trend accelerated in the last four decades? And if the trend has grown, are the media's images linked to this?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Some say the images of men's bodies in the media began with a few movements in popular culture. Rohlinger (Rohlinger, 2002, 61-72) examined how the changing American values have influenced advertiser practices as they relate to sexualized images of men in mainstream media. Men as sex symbols have become more focused because of economic shifts, cultural factors and the gay liberation movement on representations of masculinity in the post 1960s era. After posing sexualized images of men in larger social, economical, and political context, the implications of male objectification is discussed. (Rohlinger, 2002, 61-72).

Rohlinger targeted an audience of men from ages 18 to 49. Participants examined images of men in magazines such as *GQ*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Men's Health*, *Popular Magazine*, *BusinessWeek* and others. An extensive coding scheme was developed to analyze the depictions of masculinity in the sample. The coding scheme was based on a historical analysis of masculinity. There were nine images depicted: the hero, the outdoors man, the urban man, the family man, the breadwinner, the man at work, the erotic male, the consumer and the quiescent man.

The results showed that out of the nine depictions, four were most prominent: the erotic male, the hero, the man at work and the consumer. Researchers concluded that the prominence of the erotic male image may be linked to the gay liberation movement. The movement challenged traditional definitions of sexuality and encouraged celebration of the body.

Age and gender roles may also play a factor in why men are looking to bodybuilders and fitness models to emulate. Heidenstam (1980) wrote that men usually become self-conscious of being fit or non-fit adults between the ages of 16 and 19. "This is the time when they become aware of physical deficiencies and have the wish or incentive to do something to rectify the matter. Some, of course, start early depending on their contact with others, or whether they get

encouragement at home from their parents and other relationships.” Heidenstam goes on to say that at earlier ages boys are athletically minded and not as much concerned with physique. But the link between physique, early adolescent athleticism and adult bodybuilding can all stem back from gender roles taught shortly after birth.

Gustafson (Gustafson, 2006, 6-28) examined how celebrity models featured in magazine advertisement’s influence women’s perception of body shape. The purpose of his study was to define beauty as it relates to cultural norms and determine if the definition of beauty has been exemplified in advertisements. The study looked at the images of beauty as displayed by advertisers over the last two centuries. In the early 1800s, the Greek standard of beauty was a full feminine figure idealized by women and men in advertisements. In the late 1800s, women with an athletic, slimmer, feminine build were used. In the 1960s, the standard of beauty changed mainly with the rise of fashion icon “Twiggy.” She was known for her thin waif-like figure, and this standard still exists in the fashion industry today. Despite subtle changes back toward the Greek ideal of beauty with the full-figured or plus-size models, progress is slow.

To answer the research question, the investigators asked 39 women to Q-sort a selection of magazine articles (Gustafson, 2006, 6-28). The sample included 39 women between the ages of 20 and 60. Each subject was asked to do a Q-sort of 10 different advertisements of four different female body shapes. There were nine comments used to help rank the images.

1. It gave a good representation of women.
2. The model looks healthy and like a normal person.
3. I like ads that are more realistic.
4. I relate more to active people
5. I like more natural poses and fully clothed models.
6. It’s nice to see a healthy older woman exercising.
7. Queen Latifah’s beauty is flawless.



8. I just like Latifah. She is comfortable with her body.
9. I like the model's clothes and the colors in the ad.

The study concluded with four findings. First, four different body shapes elicited mixed feelings about liking or disliking plus-sized models. Second, the Dove firming cream ad using real women with plus-sized shapes was not universally accepted. Third, the use of celebrities can positively or negatively affect the likeability of advertising visuals. The fourth finding was whether or not consumers liked the particular advertisement's visual presentation. This information was used to determine the advertisement itself contributed to a positive feeling about possible purchase intention. Consumers were more pleased than not with the overall presentation.

Gustafson (2006, 3-18) examined the effects of diet and exercise advertisements on high school girls. The purpose of this study was to determine any correlation between eating disorders in this population and advertisements. The researcher noticed that over the past century, advertisers used many female stereotypes to sell products and ideas to women. In the case of body image commodities, the effects are believed to have produced harmful psychological and physiological effects. Although advertisers knew and made attempts to use more "socially acceptable" images, new problems emerged.

Four research questions were used to find any correlations between advertisements and eating disorders in high school females.

1. Of the female stereotypes commonly used in advertising, which ones are perceived as most harmful?
2. Are magazines advertisements that perpetuate the "thin ideal" perceived as more or less harmful as other female stereotypes?
3. Does ranking of advertising female stereotypes differ by either the subject's possible presence of anorexic cognitions, body anxiety or dieting behavior?

4. Which female stereotypes are considered the most harmful to women's health?

To answer these questions a Q-methodology, personal interviews and a four-part questionnaire were administered. Forty four high school girls from ages 14 to 18 were used for the study. Participants had to rank ads as harmful and non-harmful. Then each participant was given a personal interview to understand why she ranked the ads the way she did. The next three steps involved were a self-administered questionnaire. The discussion found that women are accustomed to seeing slim models but do not necessarily see the harm in portrayed stereotypes.

The growing trend of men's obsession with body type can be linked only to how they define their own body type. William H. Sheldon, an American psychologist, devised a classification system for most common body types. "It was Sheldon who introduced his theory of Somatypes back in the 1940s. His basic theory proposed that there are basically three body types, and each body type has a specific personality associated with it. The theories that Sheldon presented have become a central vein running through literature and research with respect to weight loss, exercise and bodybuilding. The body type system that Sheldon introduced characterized the human body as ectomorphic, mesomorphic, or endomorphic," said Jeff Mayner, (Mayner, Bodybuilding.com.)

Bodybuilding.com, a website that specializes in chat rooms, information, products and facts about anything dealing with bodybuilding, provided definitions of terms associated with the sport to understand different body types and how they are manipulated for maximum results.

**Definition of terms provided by Bodybuilding.com**

**Somatypes:** A person's main body type.

**Ectomorph:** A thin, delicate build usually characterizes the ectomorph. This individual has trouble gaining weight and muscle growth takes much longer to achieve and is harder to maintain. The ectomorph is very lean with little body fat and usually very little muscle mass. These

individuals tend to be like the endurance athletes such as long distance marathon runners or the tall, very lean super-models.

**Mesomorph:** A hard, muscular body with a more mature appearance usually characterizes the mesomorph. This individual has little trouble gaining or losing weight and possesses the ability to rapidly pack on muscle mass.

**Endomorph:** The endomorph is usually characterized by a soft, round body and is usually found on a person of large stature. This individual has trouble losing weight but usually gains muscle rather easily. These individuals tend to be heavy with a high percentage of both body fat and muscle. Persons such as football linemen or extremely obese individuals are examples of those who fall into this category. Diet and exercise both are of utmost importance to those of this body type.

Fitness professionals as well as psychologists believe that most bodies fall generally into these three types. There is some crossing of the body types such as endomorphs who will have mesomorph traits, mesomorph with endomorph traits, or ectomorphs with mesomorph traits and so on. Most fitness celebrities appear have a combination of three types due to extreme measures on must take to have their bodies perfectly proportion. For instance, it is always helpful in placing high during a competition if a muscular endomorph or mesomorphs has the waist size of an ectomorph to offset wide shoulders and bulging quadriceps. All champion bodybuilders have mesomorphics characteristics. They would not be able to make to champion level if they did not. A person who is largely ectomorphic or endomorphic does not the genetic make up to become a champion bodybuilder

Hansen (2005, 18) said: “If you look at some of the bodybuilding champions from the past, you see that not all were natural mesomorphs. Many had characteristics of either endomorphs or ectomorphs. The first “Mr. Olympia,” Larry Scott, was very skinny when he began training; therefore, he could be classified as an ecto-mesomorph. Frank Zane (bodybuilder) who developed

a very aesthetic physique along the lines of classic Greek sculpture could also be described as an ecto-mesomorph. Both of these Mr. Olympias had difficulty adding muscle tissue because of their natural ectomorphic tendencies.”

Other famous bodybuilders were naturally heavy and had difficulty dropping weight to reach a mesomorphic status. They were classified as endo-mesomorphs. Danny Padilla and Dave Draper fit this classification and followed strict diets to achieve this build without the aid of illegal supplements.

The obsession with trying to change a natural body type for both bodybuilders and non-athletes is usually attributed to reasons of vanity and not of health. Smith (1989, 25) said: “Most bodybuilders, I believe, are engaged in an attempt at ‘self actualization.’ They have fallen in love with an image rather than a healthy love for themselves.”

Judges of competitions need to fall in love with image as well as the athletes. Vascularity, muscularity, symmetry and conditioning are the four traits judges look for when trying to place bodybuilders during a competition.

Muscularity is the base for all bodybuilders’ physiques when trying to be a successful competitor. Symmetry is probably the second most important feature according to some judges. Symmetry and proper proportions create the aesthetic of what bodybuilding is intended to do as a sport. It is not just about being the biggest guy or girl on stage. Conditioning is equally important because it provides a tell-tale sign of how well the athlete dieted. Vascularity in a competitor showcases the water depletion from the body to better exemplify the skin against muscle image. The 12 or 16 week preparation including dieting, exercising and receiving proper rest is so that a body builder can come in to the completion with the complete package of being muscular, vascular, symmetrical and conditioned.

Other Terms Associated with Bodybuilding provided by Lee Hayward fitness writer and trainer.

**Vascularity:** The prominence of veins and arteries over the muscles and beneath the skin of a self-defined bodybuilder.

**Muscularity:** The muscle size and amount of muscles prominent in a bodybuilder during competition.

**Conditioning:** A term used to denote a bodybuilder who has an extremely high degree of muscular definition due to a low degree of body fat.

**Symmetry:** The shape or general outline of a person's body, as when seen in silhouette. If you have good symmetry, you will have relatively wide shoulders, flaring lats, a small waist-hip structure, and generally small joints.

Over the last decade more and more legal dietary supplements have come onto the market to help competitors develop these traits. However, bodybuilders are not the only ones who are purchasing this product; non-competitors are buying these products as well. It seems everyone is trying to get the bodybuilder look. Even gyms are stockpiling these supplements and selling them to men and women alike. The fact that these products make up the majority of content in fitness magazines may not be a coincidence. Does the media have any responsibility for men's obsession with trying to get the perfect body?

## **Research Questions**

The preceding discussion and literature review leads to these three research questions:

Research Question 1: Have men tried to emulate bodybuilders and fitness models in the last four decades?

Research Question 2: If men are trying to emulate certain body images, have the trends changed over the last four decades?

Research Question 3: If the trend has grown, are the media images linked to this?

## **METHODOLOGY**

The researcher studied men's body images in sample issues of two bodybuilding magazines and one high fashion magazine over four decades. The years studied were the 12 editions of 1970, 1980, 1990 and 2000. Some months were not available. The three magazines used were *GQ*, *Muscular Development*, and *Iron Man*. The researcher then looked at the covers as well as other images inside of the magazine and assessed what particular body type -- ectomorphic, endomorphic, mesomorphic -- were featured that year. The models who appeared on the covers were recorded and their body types were determined by either their height and weight or the classes in which they competed. It was also revealed how many covers they appeared on and the span of years in which they made appearances. Next related articles from that year and other articles in fitness and celebrity news were evaluated to see if there was a link between any celebrity icons and fitness trends that appeared in that era.

The second part of the research was to analyze books written on bodybuilding and fitness specifically dealing with men from those decades. The books used included brand books, which meant those books written by a particular brand name gym such as Gold's Gym or Diamond Gym. The second type of books used were those with exercise routines and diets that were

popular for bodybuilding and fitness during the years surveyed. The third type of books provided any psychological information as to why men can become obsessed with the body. After all of the data was analyzed, the final step was to determine if there were any changing trends in body image in men over 40 years.

The coding scheme that found validity to the study was defining terms of body types. After the terms were defined, the researcher determined the closest body type based on height, weight, and the types of classes competed in such as light, middle, and heavyweight. Models were classified by height and body type. All fitness models were considered mesomorphs. Additional traits included short, tall, average height, endo-mesomorph or ecto-mesomorph. If a model was five feet, seven inches or shorter and competed in classes such as lightweight or short class they were classified as short and then given a more specific body type such as endo-mesomorph or ecto-mesomorph. If the model was five-feet, eight inches to five-feet, ten inches, they were considered as average height and were just given a specific mesomorphic trait. If the model was taller than five feet, ten inches and competed in heavyweight or tall classes, then the model was classified as tall and given a specific mesomorphic body type. The two fitness magazines used did provide the amount of covers every model appeared on during the years active in the profession, so that information was stated to better see if the model was linked to any trends. Also the years that the model appeared on the magazine covers was disclosed. The high fashion magazine does not provide the same type of in-depth information on body type, so the researcher determined body type based on the actors' or models' appearance on the cover. After the researcher determined all of the body types for all three magazines, he then counted the frequency of all the body types that appeared on the covers for that year.

### **Body Building Images Over Four Decades**

The Adonis complex could be the reason why men are reported to have a growing

obsession with their body types over the last few decades, but what caused men to have the Adonis complex? Although plenty of attention has been given to women's obsession with body type as portrayed by magazines, men's fitness magazines have equally made followers of their customers. The first marketing strategy employed by the magazines is to have a symmetrically and physically perfect looking man on the cover. The next strategy is a feature profile about how the model got into fitness; this humanizes them and lets readers know that they can obtain the same physique also. Then the magazine will have a full week of workouts and routines for the reader to follow. Finally, they will have a list of dietary supplements that patrons can purchase to ensure results.

Marketing for men's products has been an underground business due to the illegality of some products. Many fitness models do use illegal supplements to keep their body in "perfect" condition. Bodybuilder Arnold Schwarzenegger, who has appeared on the most covers of fitness magazines, boasted about steroid usage in the documentary *Pumping Iron*, which was released in the late 1970s. But steroid usage dates back to when fitness models first started to emerge on the mainstream. One of the first bodybuilding magazines was published in the late 1930s. Since the 1930s, many different types of fitness magazines have been launched.

## **RESULTS**

The charts are set up to show the dates that are available in the magazines' archives. This information provides the models' names, body type, and how many covers they have appeared on throughout their professional careers. The number of covers on which they have appeared will also give the readers an idea of how coveted their body type was for their profession.



<b>Table1</b> <b>Totals for <i>Muscular Development</i> • 1970s issues</b>				
<b>Date</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Model</b>	<b>Body Type</b>	<b># of covers</b>
1970 Jan.	V. 7, No. 1	Boyer Coe	Mesomorph	36
1970 Feb.	V. 7, No. 2	Ken Waller	Tall-endo-mesomorph	11
1970 Mar.	V. 7, No. 3	Larry Scott, Veronica Chaco	Mesomorph	38
1970 April	V. 7, No. 4	Anibal Lopez	Short-mesomorph	8
1970 May	V. 7, No. 5	Vic Tanny Jr	n/a	n/a
1970 June	V. 7, No. 6	Chris Dickerson	Short-mesomorph	40
1970 July	V. 7, No. 7	Ellington Darden	n/a	8
1970 Aug.	V. 7, No. 8	John Schleicher	Tall-endo-mesomorph	5
1970 Sept.	V. 7, No. 9	Tony Gambin	n/a	n/a
1970 Oct.	V. 7, No. 10	Gene Massey Terri Mancusi	Tall-ecto-mesomorph	3
1970 Nov.	V. 7, No. 11	Steve Reeves	Tall-ecto-mesomorph	59
1970 Dec.	V. 7, No. 12	Ed Corney	Mesomorph	11

This year showed all 12 months. The data reveals different mesomorphic body types represented for this year. Model Steve Reeves is a tall-ecto-mesomorph and has appeared on more covers than any other model. Gene Massey is also a tall-ecto-mesomorph but has not appeared on many covers. One can conclude that there are other qualities in an athlete that make admirable. Chris Dickerson is a short-mesomorph who has appeared on 40 magazine covers. Larry Scott and Boyer Coe are both average height mesomorphs who have also appeared on 40 covers. Perhaps some can say short and average height mesomorphs are the more coveted body

type for this season. However Ed Corney and Annibal lopez fall into these categories and only appear on about ten covers throughout their careers.

<b>Table 2</b> <b>Totals for <i>Muscular Development</i> • 1980s editions</b>				
<b>Date</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Model</b>	<b>BodyType</b>	<b># of covers</b>
1979 Dec.	V. 16, No. 6	Andreas Cahling	Endo-mesomorph	15
1980 Feb.	V. 17, No. 1	Frank Pantoja	Mesomorph	1
1980 April	V. 17, No. 2	Joe Means	Mesomorph	1
1980 June	V. 17, No. 3	Bill Kazmaier	n/a	n/a
1980 Aug.	V. 17, No. 4	Marty Vranicar	Tall-endo-mesomorph	2
1980 Oct.	V. 17, No. 5	Roger Estep	n/a	n/a
1980 Dec.	V. 17, No. 6	John Kemper	Mesomorph	9

Only half of the year was represented; definitive conclusions are hard to make based on having so little data. Of the moths that are represented, more average height mesomorphs appear on the covers.

<b>Table 3</b> <b>Totals for <i>Muscular Development</i> • 1990s editions</b>				
<b>Date</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Model</b>	<b>Body Type</b>	<b># of covers</b>
1990 Jan.	V. 27, No. 1	Cory Everson	Tall-mesomorph	47
1990 Feb.	V. 27, No. 2	Troy Zuccolotto	Endo-mesomorph	12
1990 Mar.	V. 27, No. 3	Bob Cicherillo	Tall-endo-mesomorph	8
1990 April	V. 27, No. 4	Mike Quinn	Tall-endo-mesomorph	23
1990 May	V. 27, No. 5	Sandy Riddell	Tall-mesomorph	7
1990 June	V. 27, No. 6	Shawn Ray Laura Creavalle	Mesomorph	35
1990 July	V. 27, No. 7	Drorit Kernes Steve Henneberry	Mesomorph	5
1990 Aug.	V. 27, No. 8	Franco Santoriello	Mesomorph	7
1990 Sept.	V. 27, No. 9	Sonny Schmidt Tonya Knight	Tall-endo-mesomorph	4
1990 Oct.	V. 27, No. 10	David Dearth	Mesomorph	6
1990 Nov.	V. 27, No. 11	Cory Everson, Chuck Norris	Tall-mesomorph	47
1990 Dec.	V. 27, No. 12	Jim Quinn	Tall-mesomorph	4

All months are represented here and concrete conclusions can be drawn. Cory Everson, a female bodybuilder, graced over 47 covers throughout her career. This is more of a statement about the diversification of women athletes as icons than it is about particular body types being marketable for publication. Next in line for most covers throughout their professional career is Mike Quinn, who sports a tall-endo-mesomorphic body. Seven coincidentally have taller mesomorphic bodies; where as the other five models are average height. Based on the

information provided, conclusions can be made that the 1990s edition of this magazine was moving toward the bigger framed bodybuilders.

There were a variety of athletes, fitness models and celebrities who appeared this decade and stats were not recorded.

<b>Table 4</b> <b>Totals for <i>Muscular Development</i> • 2000 editions</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Model</b>
2000 Jan.	V. 37, No. 1	football's Jamal Anderson
2000 Feb.	V. 37, No. 2	cowboy's cheerleader Shar Shahi
2000 March	V. 37, No. 3	Diedre Pagnanelli
2000 April	V. 37, No. 4	Laila Ali
2000 May	V. 37, No. 5	Chyna Doll
2000 June	V. 37, No. 6	Antonio Sabato Jr
2000 July	V. 37, No. 7	Cindy Margolis
2000 Aug.	V. 37, No. 8	Torrie Wilson
2000 Sept.	V. 37, No. 9	Mike O'Hearn
2000 Oct.	V. 37, No. 10	Bill Goldberg
2000 Nov.	V. 37, No. 11	Gabe Kapler
2000 Dec.	V. 37, No. 12	Rena Mero

The only conclusions that may drawn about this data is that celebrities were becoming more athletic in appearance if they could grace the covers of popular fitness magazines. Also celebrities such as actors, musician and mainstream sport athletes like football, basketball and baseball players are much more marketable than bodybuilders. This is why more recent editions of fitness magazines have leaned toward using mainstream celebrities on the cover as opposed to just fitness models.

<b>Table 5</b> <b>Totals for <i>Iron Man</i> • 1970s editions</b>				
<b>Date</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Model</b>	<b>BodyType</b>	<b># of Covers</b>
1970 Jan.	V. 29, No. 2	Ken Waller	Tall-endo-mesomorph	11
1970 March	V. 29, No. 3	Arnold Schwarzenegger	Tall-endo-mesomorph	128
1970 May	V. 29, No. 4	Robert Moore	n/a	n/a
1970 July	V. 29, No. 5	Chris Dickerson	Short-mesomorph	40
1970 Sept.	V. 29, No. 6	Casey Viator	Mesomorph	21
1970 Nov.	V. 30, No. 1	Ken Waller	Tall-endo-mesomorph	11

Only half of the year is represented so making concrete conclusions of the data is difficult. However, Arnold Schwarzenegger appeared on more than 120 covers in his career. He has appeared on more covers than any other bodybuilder in history making him the epitome of bodybuilder images. Of course he has a tall-endo-mesomorphic frame. Ken Waller was the bodybuilder who appeared least often on magazine covers as compared to other models represented this year. He did, however, appear on two covers of *Iron Man* and has the same body type as Schwarzenegger. Experts believed that *Iron Man* was trying to capitalize on using the bigger models for its magazine.

<b>Table 6</b> <b>Totals for <i>Iron Man</i> • 1980s edition</b>				
<b>Date</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Model</b>	<b>Body Type</b>	<b># of covers</b>
1980 Jan.	V. 39, No. 2	Ray Mentzer	Mesomorph	5
1980 March	V. 39, No. 3	Frank Zane	Mesomorph	60
1980 May	V. 39, No. 4	Mario Nieves	Short-mesomorph	3
1980 July	V. 39, No. 5	Zarif Chaban	n/a	n/a
1980 Sept.	V. 39, No. 6	Chris Dickerson	Short-mesomorph	40
1980 Nov.	V. 40, No. 1	Ernie Santiago	Short-mesomorph	5

Only half of the year is represented so making concrete conclusions of the data is difficult. However Frank Zane is on the scene during this year. He is the second model to appear the most on fitness covers thus making him an icon for bodybuilding. Zane is the anti-Arnold, because he is average height (5 feet 9 inches) and a regular mesomorph. Zane is known for his perfect symmetry and conditioning where as Schwarzenegger is know for his larger muscle size. All of the models represented this year were either mesomorphs or short-mesomorphs. There were no bigger models. If any conclusion can be drawn it would be that the Zane body type was starting to take over peoples ideals about the perfect body. The fact that Charles Dickerson had 40 covers who was a short-mesomorph is a prime example that big was becoming an antiquated ideal at least for the time being.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Table 7</b>  <b>Totals for <i>Iron Man</i> • 1990s editions</b></p>				
<b>Date</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Model</b>	<b>BodyType</b>	<b># of covers</b>
1990 January	V. 49, No. 1	Vince Taylor	Mesomorph	7
1990 Feb.	V. 49, No. 2	Troy Zuccolotto Kay Perry	Endo-mesomorph	12
1990 March	V. 49, No. 3	Mike Quinn Cory Everson	Tall-endo-mesomorphs	23
1990 April	V. 49, No. 4	Lee Labrada	Short-mesomorph	35
1990 May	V. 49, No. 5	Franco Santoriello Drorit Kernes	Mesomorph	7
1990 June	V. 49, No. 6	Shawn Ray	Mesomorph	35
1990 July	V. 49, No. 7	Samir Bannout	Mesomorph	25
1990 Aug.	V. 49, No. 8	Gary Strydom	Endo-mesomorph	32
1990 Sept.	V. 49, No. 9	Bob Paris	Tall-endo-mesomorphs	19
1990 Oct.	V. 49, No 10	Sandy Riddell	Tall-mesomorph	7
1990 Nov.	V. 49, No.11	Eddie Robinson	Tall-endo-mesomorphs	1
1990 Dec.	V. 49, No.12	Berry DeMey Paula Piwarunas	Endo-mesomorph	21

All months are represented. More mesomorphs are on the cover than any other group. The 1990s edition also shows that many body types are represented this year. Shawn Ray, a mesomorph did appear on more covers than any other model and has a large following of other mesomorphs on the cover. But there is still Gary Strydom, an endo-mesomorph who has 32

covers and Bob Paris who is a tall-endo-mesomorph and has appeared on 19 covers. Perhaps this is the era where both Zane body types and Schwarzenegger body types can coexist as being iconic.

Recordings for *Iron Man* 2000 editions- archival stats are unavailable for fitness models.

Only photos are shown. See results for more information.

<b>Table 8</b> <b>Totals for <i>Iron Man</i> • 2000</b>			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Model</b>	<b>BodyType</b>
2000 Jan.	V. 59, No. 1	Christian Boeving, Angel Gorges	
2000 Feb.	V. 59, No. 2	Devon Michaels	
2000 March	V. 59, No. 3	Sherry Goggin-Giardina, Jonathan Lawson	
2000 April	V. 59, No. 4	Torrie Wilson	
2000 June	V. 59, No. 6	Laurie Vaniman	
2000 July	V. 59, No. 7	Midajah Mike O'Hearn	
2000 Aug.	V. 59, No. 8	Linda O'Neill Big Poppa Pump Sharon Moore	
2000 Sept.	Vol 59, No. 9	Amy Fadhli	
2000 Oct.	Vol 59, No. 10	Christina Hunter Dan Fine	
2000 Nov.	Vol 59, No. 11	Lisa Fine, Dan Fine	
2000 Dec.	Vol 59, No. 12	Brenda Kelly Clark Bartram	

Statistics are not listed on the website for models. Also the models listed here are not well known celebrities as the ones used to pose for *Muscular Development* so data is inconclusive.

Recordings for *GQ* 1970s edition- mostly animated images were shown during this year on the cover. By animated images, means cartoon or non-photographic images. Therefore the data in this



edition is not relevant for answering whether or not bodybuilding images influenced the male physique over decades.

<b>Table 9</b> <b>Totals for <i>GQ</i> •1980s edition</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Model</b>	<b>BodyType</b>
N/a	Richard Gere	Ectomorph
N/a	John Savage	Ectomorph
N/a	Russell Long	Mesomorph
N/a	Billy Dee Williams	Mesomorph

<b>Table 10</b> <b>Totals from <i>GQ</i> • 1990s edition</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Model</b>	<b>BodyType</b>
January	Jack Nicholson	Mesomorph
Feb.	Alec Baldwin	Mesomorph
March	Bo Jackson'	Endo-mesomorph
April	Bryan Brown	Ectomorph
May	Arnold Schwarzenegger	Tall-endo-mesomorph
June	David Letterman	Mesomorph
July	Steve Martin	Mesomorph
Aug.	Nick Cage	Mesomorph
Sept.	Jim Everett	Tall-endo-mesomorph
Oct.	James Spader	Mesomorph
Nov.	Jeremy Irons	Ectomorph
Dec.	Andy Garcia	Mesomorph

<b>Table 11</b> <b>Totals for <i>GQ</i> in 2000</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Model</b>	<b>BodyType</b>
N/a	Tom Cruise	Ectomorph
N/a	Joaquin Phoenix	Mesomorph
N/a	Mark Wahlberg	Mesomorph
N/a	Brendan Frazier	Mesomorph
N/a	Kevin Spacey	Mesomorph

Table 12 Totals for All Three Magazines Sampled`								
	Ecto- morph	Meso- morph	Endo- morph	Short meso- morph	Tall meso- morph	Tall endo- meso- morph	Tall ecto- mesomorph	Endo- mesomorph
<b><i>Muscular Development</i></b>								
<b>1970</b>	0	3	0	2	0	2	2	0
<b>1980</b>	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	1
<b>1990</b>	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	1
<b>2000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b><i>Iron Man</i></b>								
<b>1970</b>	0	1	0	1	0	3	0	0
<b>1980</b>	0	2	0	3	0	0	0	0
<b>1990</b>	0	4	0	1	1	3	0	2
<b>2000</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b><i>GQ</i></b>								
<b>1970</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>1980</b>	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>1990</b>	2	7	0	0	0	2	0	1
<b>2000</b>	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>All Three Magazines</b>								
<b>1970</b>	0	4	0	3	0	5	2	0
<b>1980</b>	2	7	0	3	0	1	0	1
<b>1990</b>	2	11	0	1	3	7	0	4
<b>2000</b>	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	10	52	0	14	6	26	4	10

*GQ* is not a fitness magazine so models who appeared on covers are not appearing on it because of their fitness levels, but because of normative qualities and the success of their careers at the time. However, by viewing the photos of the celebrities one can determine what body type they come the closest too having although stats are not available. The mesomorph body type seems to be the most common for all of the actors and fitness models alike. Mesomorphic body types are in between one ectomorph and endomorph. It is the balance between being too thin or too heavy set, so it is not a surprise that actors have that body type to appeal to the most common of people and Bodybuilders need to have a mesomorph base to balance symmetry, musculature and conditioning.

## DISCUSSION

One point is clear about bodybuilders: a mesomorph build is essential to success in this profession. The fitness models seen on the covers all had strong mesomorph traits and were classified as a mesomorph regardless of what they're natural body types were. Although the mesomorph traits were strong, it was easy to determine that a lot of the bodybuilders were not natural mesomorphs and still exemplified endomorphic and ectomorphic traits. If this was the case, then those fitness models were given the classification ecto-mesomorphs or endo-mesomorphs. If the model was below 5'8" and competed in classes such as lightweight or short class he was classified as short and then given a body type. If the model was 5'8" to 5'10" he was considered as average height and just given a body type. If the model was taller than 5'10" he was considered to be "tall" and assigned a body type.

*Muscular Development* in 1970 revealed an almost even distribution for the nine covers. There were two models who were short-mesomorphs. There were three models who were mesomorphs. There were two models who were tall-endo-mesomorphs. There were two models who were tall-ecto-mesomorphs.

For 1980, there were only six covers *Muscular Development*. There were three models who were mesomorphs, one who was an endo-mesomorph, one who was a tall-endo-mesomorph, and one who was a tall-ecto-mesomorph.

For 1990, all twelve months were provided. This was another year with an almost even distribution of body types. There were four mesomorphs and four tall-endo-mesomorphs. Three covers featured women who were considered tall for women but considered to be mesomorphs for the purposes of bodybuilding. Two of the covers featured the same woman. There was one cover with an endo-mesomorph. In 2000, there were a variety of different athletes, models and actors and stats about body types were not provided.

There were only six editions of *Iron Man* provided in 1970. There were three covers

featuring tall-endo-mesomorphs. One of the covers featured a short-mesomorph. Statistics about one of the models were unavailable. There were only five editions provided for 1980. Three covers featured mesomorphs and two covers featured short-mesomorphs. All twelve covers were provided in 1990. This again was almost an even distribution of body types. There were four covers with mesomorphs on it, three covers featuring tall-endo-mesomorphs, three covers featuring endo-mesomorphs, one with tall-mesomorph (female previously featured) and one cover with a short-mesomorph. The 2000 editions did feature fitness models but did not provide stats.

*GQ* mostly had animated images (drawings, paintings, computer generated or non-photographic images) in 1970. In the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s the magazine had a host of different celebrities who were relatively thin. No one on the cover was obese or the slightest bit overweight. Mesomorph was the most frequent body type. Heights of the celebrities were not provided by the *GQ* archives.

After all of the covers were totaled; models who were labeled as simply mesomorphs dominated fashion and fitness magazines alike. There were a total of 28 mesomorphs. Tall-endo-mesomorphs were next in appearing on many covers. Out of the sample, 15 appeared on the covers. There were eight short-mesomorphs to grace covers. Then there was a large drop; five endo-mesomorphs, four ectomorphs, three tall-mesomorphs, and two tall-ecto-mesomorphs appeared on the covers.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Not many trends can be determined by using the three magazines due to the level of error created by not using a larger sample. However, one trend found was *GQ* likes slimmer/leaner individuals on the cover. The two bodybuilding magazines mainly feature mesomorphs and endo-mesomorphs no matter what height they were. There are certain individuals who did appear on

the covers multiple times and most of them were mesomorphs or endo-mesomorphs. The amount of tall-endo-mesomorphs who did appear on the cover could be influenced by Arnold Schwarzenegger. His look has always been desirable in bodybuilding and still sets the standards in terms of height and muscularity and what judges determine is “perfect” in bodybuilding. The amount of mesomorphs who appeared on magazines could also be linked to Frank Zane, who set new standards, after Arnold in bodybuilding. Zane was known for having exemplary symmetry, conditioning and posing. These are traits that judges of bodybuilding competitions highly consider after he came on to the scene. Arnold Schwarzenegger and Frank Zane have appeared on the most covers of any bodybuilders during any decades.

The purpose of revealing how many covers an individual was featured on was to determine what body type the media frequently showcased. This information was to be used to determine if male readers were trying to obtain that body type and if that can be seen anywhere in the popular literature. Then combining the information from the two fitness magazines, the high fashion magazine and popular literature, a correlation was supposed to be shown between the images the media displayed and the growing trend of men obsessing over body type. This information was to also be used to determine if these images are contributing to the Adonis Complex.

The results of the high fashion magazine and the fitness magazines in the first three years surveyed are all too different to reach definitive conclusions. The only concept that the magazines do agree on is that “fat” is unacceptable. No person labeled as just an endomorph was featured on any cover of any of the magazines. Coincidentally, there were less than a handful of people who were classified as ectomorphs featured on covers as well. In the new millennium both magazines showcase actors and athletes alike. Many actors are becoming “athlete-like” by dieting and conditioning so they can be fashion/ fitness icons. Are the bodybuilders inspiring, the actors and

models and in turn the actors and models inspire the viewers? There is not really an answer based on the research.

The new millennium did showcase more actors and celebrity athletes as opposed to just bodybuilder competitors and fitness models. Mainstream celebrities sell more magazines than any other public figures. *GQ* was way ahead of the other two magazines because it realized that people are more drawn to their favorite actor than they are to a bodybuilder no matter how perfect or ideal their body type. Fitness magazines caught on to the idea of having celebrity faces on their magazine covers but still featured bodybuilders and other athletes on the inside. The key to this idea is that the celebrity face must have a semi-comparable bodybuilding physique to accompany the package. Now magazines such as *Flex*, *Iron Man*, and *Muscular Development* feature Ultimate Fighters, NFL players and super athletes turned actors. It is trying to combine the best of both worlds.

However, men who are into bodybuilding may obsess over their bodies' due to images seen in bodybuilding magazines. Bodybuilding.com reported that many new bodybuilders get their diets and workouts by following those fitness models who are featured in the magazines. As for magazines such as *GQ*, the modern day high fashion body includes being muscular and extremely conditioned as opposed to those in earlier decades where lean and slight muscle tone won the prize. Even actors who appear in movies are trying to be more conditioned and very muscular in this decade. All three of the magazines have actors who are revealing their diet and exercise plans to the masses.

To answer the first research question, men are trying to imitate bodybuilders and fitness models. Based on the growing industry, many outlets are being provided to ensure dietary and vanity success such as bodybuilding.com, bigmuscle.com and countless publications. There are new diets followed by bodybuilders coming to the mainstream media. The public sanction of drugs such as anabolic steroids, clenbuterol, and ephedra are also examples that men are

employing bodybuilding techniques to get the “perfect body.” News reports suggests that deaths and injuries due to consuming massive amounts of these substances are not only harming professional athletes but are also influencing men of all ages to utilize these drugs which in turn are hazardous to the health of consumers. Legal examples are targeting baseball players. Jose Conseco and Alexander Rodriguez are examples of athletes who were held accountable for illegal substance abuse in major league sports.

Research question number two asked if trends have changed over the last four decades. Trends have changed over the last four decades; in high fashion and in bodybuilding alike. The images show that being muscular and extremely conditioned is the new look. In past decades, muscularity and symmetry were the main focuses of bodybuilding, where as lean muscle tone was the look in high fashion. Many celebrities are moving to a more muscular and conditioned look. “Entertainment Tonight” has run multiple segments with actors training with professional athletes to ensure better physiques. However it is difficult to determine any concrete changes based on who appeared on the covers of these magazines because all mesomorphic and lean body types have and are being represented over all of the decades used. One trend that is becoming more prominent in this decade is high fashion models who resemble or represent more of an endomorphic look. An example of this is America’s Next Top Model season 10 winner Whitney Thompson. She was the first full figured model to win the show. In men’s fashion and in bodybuilding, “pure endomorphs” have no place. Larger men as fitness icons still must have a muscular and somewhat mesomorphic base. Interim Heavyweight champion of the Ultimate Fighting Championship Frank Mir, stands 6’3” inches tall and is usually about 255 pounds. He appeared on the covers of fitness magazines after obtaining the interim heavyweight title. He explained in interviews that he does not really like to diet, but must do so a little to make weight for his fights. Although Mir is not the most conditioned fighter, he still has a very muscular base which still keeps him in the running as a fitness icon. Anyone else who is just “fat” or chubby

with no musculature usually is not considered fit in this particular forum.

Research question three asked if trends have grown, then were media images linked to this change? Media images were linked to every change in every genre of life. Media is the source that interconnects worlds. The bodybuilding magazines showcased new looks over years. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century fitness magazines and fashion magazines are pretty much similar in the body types they showcase. Most of them do showcase mesomorph models or people striving to attain those body types. Websites such as [bodybuilding.com](http://bodybuilding.com) or [musclememory.com](http://musclememory.com) are evidence that the media is influencing viewers. Viewers can also have profiles and exchange information about working out or dieting with professional athletes. Non-professional athletes too can post progression shots and amateur modeling pictures for public view. There are thousands of people using these websites, any viewer can pinpoint some icon who they have tried to imitate and post that information as apart of their profile. The same was to be said for other media forums such as television, magazines, videos and books. The fitness market is growing because readers connect to the models and wish to attain their ideals regardless of whether are active in accomplishing those tasks.



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